

or turned into fiery coffins. Those who were taken POW had to endure their own planes being shot down or otherwise damaged sufficiently to cause the crews to bail out. Often crewmates—close friends—did not make it out of the burning aircraft. Those lucky enough to see their parachutes open, had to then go through a perilous descent amid flak and gunfire from the ground.

Many crews were then captured by incensed civilians who had seen their property destroyed or had loved ones killed or maimed by Allied bombs. Those civilians at times would beat, spit upon, or even try to lynch the captured crews. And in the case of Stalag Luft IV, once the POW's had arrived at the railroad station near the camp, though exhausted, unfed, and often wounded, many were forced to run the 2 miles to the camp at the points of bayonets. Those who dropped behind were either bayoneted or bitten on the legs by police dogs. And all that was just the prelude to their incarceration where they were underfed, overcrowded, and often maltreated.

In February 1945, the Soviet offensive was rapidly pushing toward Stalag Luft IV. The German High Command determined that it was necessary that the POW's be evacuated and moved into Germany. But by that stage of the war, German materiel was at a premium, and neither sufficient railcars nor trucks were available to move prisoners. Therefore the decision was made to move the Allied prisoners by foot in a forced road march.

The 86-day march was, by all accounts, savage. Men who for months, and in some cases years, had been denied proper nutrition, personal hygiene, and medical care, were forced to do something that would be difficult for well-nourished, healthy, and appropriately trained infantry soldiers to accomplish. The late Doctor [Major] Leslie Caplan, an American flight surgeon who was the chief medical officer for the 2,500-man section C from Stalag Luft IV, summed up the march up this year:

It was a march of great hardship * * * (W)e marched long distances in bitter weather and on starvation rations. We lived in filth and slept in open fields or barns. Clothing, medical facilities and sanitary facilities were utterly inadequate. Hundreds of men suffered from malnutrition, exposure, trench foot, exhaustion, dysentery, tuberculosis, and other diseases.

A number of American POW's on the march did not survive. Others suffered amputations of limbs or appendages while many more endured maladies that remained or will remain with them for the remainder of their lives. For nearly 500 miles and over 86 days, enduring unbelievably inhumane conditions, the men from Stalag Luft IV walked, limped and, in some cases, crawled onward until they reached the end of their march, with their liberation by the American 104th Infantry Division on April 26, 1945.

Unfortunately, the story of the men of Stalag Luft IV, replete with tales of the selfless and often heroic deeds of prisoners looking after other prisoners and helping each other to survive under deplorable conditions, is not well known. I therefore rise today to bring their saga of victory over incredible adversity to the attention of my colleagues. I trust that these comments will serve as a springboard for a wider awareness among the American people of what the prisoners from Stalag Luft IV—and all prisoner of war camps—endured in the pursuit of freedom.

I especially want to honor three Stalag Luft IV veterans who endured and survived the march. Cpl. Bob McVicker, a fellow Virginian from Alexandria, S. Sgt. Ralph Pippens of Alexandria, LA, and Sgt. Arthur Duchesneau of Daytona Beach, FL, brought this important piece of history to my attention and provided me with in-depth information, to include testimony by Dr. Caplan, articles, personal diaries and photographs.

Mr. McVicker, Mr. Pippens, and Mr. Duchesneau, at different points along the march, were each too impaired to walk under their own power. Mr. McVicker suffered frostbite to the extent that Dr. Caplan told him, along the way, that he would likely lose his hands and feet—miraculously, he did not; Mr. Pippens was too weak from malnutrition to walk on his own during the initial stages of the march; and Mr. Duchesneau almost became completely incapacitated from dysentery. By the end of the march, all three men had lost so much weight that their bodies were mere shells of what they had been prior to their capture—Mr. McVicker, for example, at 5 foot, 8 inches, weighed but 80 pounds. Yet they each survived, mostly because of the efforts of the other two—American crewmates compassionately and selflessly helping buddies in need.

Mr. President, I am sure that my colleagues join me in saluting Mr. McVicker, Mr. Pippens, Mr. Duchesneau, the late Dr. Caplan, the other survivors of the Stalag Luft IV march, and all the brave Americans who were prisoners of war in World War II. Their service was twofold: first as fighting men putting their lives on the line, each day, in the cause of freedom and then as prisoners of war, stoically enduring incredible hardships and showing their captors that the American spirit cannot be broken, no matter how terrible the conditions. We owe them a great debt of gratitude and the memory of their service our undying respect.

FRANKLIN, NH, MARKS ITS CENTENNIAL

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, I ask my Senate colleagues to join me in recognizing the city of Franklin, NH, on the occasion of its centennial and in appreciation of the contributions its citizens have made to our Nation.

Founded at a gathering spot of the Penacook Tribe, where the Pemigewasset and Winnepesaukee Rivers meet to form the Merrimack River, Franklin proudly traces its roots deep into the history of our State and our Nation. It is here, at the original settlement of Lower Falls, where Franklin's most famous native son, Daniel Webster, would commence a career as lawyer and statesman and, eventually, go on to establish both an honored place in this Senate and a prominent role in the shaping of America.

From this settlement, Capt. Ebenezer Webster, Daniel's father, would lead a company of local men to earn distinction in the Revolutionary War and help win the independence of a new nation. Their heroics during the campaign at Saratoga begins an unbroken line of Franklin's sons and daughters serving our Nation and the cause of liberty with honor, loyalty, and valor.

Successful in commerce, Franklin was incorporated as a town in 1828 and as the city of Franklin in 1895. The historic mill town would give rise to the engineering ingenuity of Boston John Clark and the technological innovations of Walter Aiken and make significant economic contributions to our society. Spurring inventions from the deceptively simple hacksaw and the latch needle to the complexity of the circular knitting machine, Franklin would again play a pivotal role in the second industrial revolution, which propelled us forward as a modern nation.

Today, the city of Franklin continues to exhibit the character and enterprise of its distinguished past. Hardworking, first in citizenship, and steadfast in its sense of community, Franklin continues to show the can-do spirit that marked its beginnings and first 100 years as a city. Recently, named one of the 100 best small communities in America, a base for advanced industry, rich in heritage, and energetic in shaping its future, Franklin is truly a "Small City on the Move."

Join me to proudly salute Franklin, NH, the birthplace of Daniel Webster, and the enterprising spirit that has enriched a community, the State of New Hampshire, and our Nation.

V-E DAY 1995

Mr. CRAIG. Mr. President, 50 years ago, U.S. forces, along with those of our valiant and embattled allies, formally ended the victorious struggle to contain a horrific evil that had spread across the European continent. For those Americans who attended the ceremonies that marked the Nazi surrender, it was a solemn moment, for the struggle had been long and bloody, and the price to defend freedom had come at a very high cost. For the world there was joy, renewed hope of lasting peace, and resolve to protect the freedom for which so many had offered up their lives. Today many of those hopes which are held deeply in the hearts of